

GUIDE

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SMALL TOWN PASTOR

Helen A. McCarthy

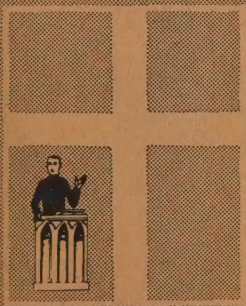
CATECHETICS FOR THE WORLD

John T. McGinn, C.S.P.

INSTRUCTION ON THE CHURCH

Rev. Martin Ramsaver

MARCH 1961, No. 156



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IT SEEMS TO ME

A Closer Look

The Institute of the Catholic Press is an informal semi-annual gathering of the editors and staff members of many of our Catholic publications. A prominent feature of their latest get-together was a "copy clinic."

Veterans and capable newcomers to some of our best Catholic periodicals and diocesan papers "studied, analyzed and criticized" material already published by the participants. Some writings were applauded; others were panned.

The object of the sessions — day-long workshops which continued into the wee hours — was to unearth deficiencies in Catholic press work and to suggest remedies. Our religious papers and periodicals have made immense strides in the last decade. But these practitioners, motivated by healthy discontent, were willing to see their writings dissected in order to achieve greater depth and quality for their apostolate.

Recent years have seen a similar effort at self-examination on the part of many Catholic apostolates in our country. And the Apostolate to non-Catholics has joined their ranks in an effort to "study, analyze and criticize" our approaches to the task of winning converts. If this promising trend continues, the apostolate to our Separated Brethren will eventually grow to maturity. At present it engages only a fraction of the dedication it deserves and it sorely needs scrutiny as to its methods and underlying principles.

It is encouraging to remember that three nation-wide conventions of convert-makers have been held in as many years. These conventions inspired numerous workshops in various dioceses for priests, seminarians, nuns and laity. Seasoned apostles shared their knowledge with newcomers and swapped experiences among themselves. When these gatherings multiply, evidencing a willingness to learn, then the apostolate will attain the popularity and depth it does not at present enjoy.

JOHN T. MCGINN, C.S.P.

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Small Town Pastor

By Helen A. McCarthy

It is said that "fools rush in where angels fear to tread." During the past twenty years I have lived in a small community and I have been intensely interested in observing the various types of priests who have been sent to serve my parish. This is usually a first pastorate, because of its size, and the pastors are in their late forties or early fifties. Some ten of these years I looked on as a Protestant. For the last ten I have been "one of their people."

The reason I am so engrossed in this study of personalities is because, as a comparatively new Catholic, I feel that it is of the utmost importance for the parish priest in a small town to make the best possible impression upon the townspeople. Today there is more need for better public relations than ever before. There seem to be several reasons for this.

About twenty-five years ago there undoubtedly was hostility toward the Catholic Church in small towns, but it was among the older people. These individuals might feel the way they did yet, aside from their immediate families and friends, no one was the wiser. However, at the present time, there is a great deal of material being printed in non-Catholic periodicals and weeklies which is fanning the flame, as it were. Mr. Blanshard, no doubt, started some of this, with his very critical and hostile books on Catholicism. Even in our own community, I find that the current of dislike comes from the younger element, the so-called intellectual groups, the liberals, although I hesitate to use this latter designation.

As a matter of fact, the role of each individual Catholic man and woman anywhere is of the utmost importance in this matter of Catholic Action and public relations between non-Catholics and the Catholic

Church. I think this should be ever in our minds as we mingle and move about in our own social groups. Thinking back over the years, I can remember that my own opinions of Catholicism have been strengthened or weakened, as the case might be, by the things that Catholics did and said in my presence.

In a small town the part the parish priest plays is of the utmost significance. Even more so is this true in an old New England community such as I live in, where the percentage of Catholics is small in comparison to the rest of the population. He is watched continuously. Wherever he appears, he is immediately conspicuous, even by the nature of his clothes. He stands out. Whatever he says and does is very noticeable.

My social contacts do not regularly include bishops, but, once a few years ago, I met one such dignitary and had a few minutes' conversation with him. Our discussion included the importance of good priests being sent to the small town. I have never forgotten what this gentleman told me. "In the small town the priest is the Roman Catholic Church. . . . It rises and falls with him. . . . I have always contended that our *best* men should be sent to small communities. It doesn't matter, relatively speaking, quite so much in the city parishes where there are several priests connected with one church, but in the small parish where the pastor is alone, with no curates, he should be of the highest caliber." That is the gist of what he said.

I am not going to discuss the good character of a priest. That is a *sine qua non*. It goes without saying that he should possess the sterling qualities one always considers to be priestly. But I am going to mention a few characteristics which I know would help not only the priest who possesses them, but would aid the Catholic people of his parish immeasurably in their relationship with the rest of their fellow citizens.

A pleasant, outgoing personality is a major asset. If the priest can greet everyone he meets (and I mean everyone) cordially with a smile, he is immediately tabulated as a "fine fellow." We all like friendliness and that goes a long way on a village street.

If he would make a point to attend at least some local social events, such as scout get-togethers, fairs and exhibits, public meetings, school plays, recitals, this would show he is interested in what the people of the town are trying to do. His own parishioners are contributing to some of these events. They would certainly appreciate his co-operation and visible approval.

PEOPLE TO CULTIVATE

If he can be genuinely interested in what the youngsters are doing, the parents would respond with vast dividends of approval and affection. A priest I know made a point of taking a mixed group of neighbors' children to the circus. Another priest attended the local public high school basketball games. That is not necessary, but it was surely appreciated by the fathers and mothers of the players. That man had a terrific influence for good on those boys, both Protestant and Catholic.

Priests who have once lived in small communities know how helpful it is to establish a friendly rapport with the local ministers. I know a priest who made a point of calling on the ministers in his locality. In fact, although they didn't see "eye to eye" on doctrine, many a spirited discussion was held in the Baptist parsonage or the Catholic rectory (for Priest and Parson went back and forth). This same priest invited the Congregational minister and his wife to come in and see the vestments he wore during the different religious seasons of the year. They were fascinated by the information he gave them and thanked him profoundly for taking time to explain it all to them.

Priests who get involved in politics sometimes get into "hot water." It just doesn't work out. Nor does it for ministers either.

The subject of mixed marriages comes to my mind. I am not acquainted with the statistics of mixed marriages in small towns as compared with those in cities. Because the dominant population trend is Protestant in our town, there seem to be quite a number of mixed marriages. The role of the

parish priest in this situation is most delicate in the small community. The priest who is so fired with zeal for his religion that he bursts into a rage when one of his parishioners approaches him concerning such nuptials, or treats the Protestant fiancé with coldness, does our Catholic cause many times more harm than good. No matter how rocky he may feel the course of a mixed marriage is, the warmth and kindness with which he treats the non-Catholic will ever be remembered and appreciated. An austere greeting and direful predictions of future unhappiness will cast a dash of cold water over the best of intentions. I can use my own mixed marriage as an example of the perfect clerical co-operation. Bless the wonderful man who married my husband and me!

Sixteen years ago, at the age of twenty-seven, I had never met a Catholic priest. We approached the rectory to make plans for our marriage with fear and trembling. At least, I did. My husband-to-be was nervous, too. The jolliest, kindest individual greeted us. He just warmed the cockles of my heart and, believe me, our friendship continues today. I have sung his praises to all my relatives, to critical Protestant friends who have anecdotes involving less understanding clerics. He surely started me on the path to Roman Catholicism!

NEWS TRAVELS FAST

News travels fast in a small town and the priest who gets the reputation of being a harsh tyrant is avoided as much as is humanly possible. I know of a pastor who had the reputation of putting prospective couples through such a third degree. I am certain none of the Protestants involved ever became Roman Catholics. Fear of clerical domination is too current these days.

Last, but not least, the small town church is often visited by non-Catholic friends and relatives of its parishioners. Hardly a week can pass without one such being present in the congregation. Harsh criticism of Protestant practices or doctrine seems out of place to me in the Catholic sermon or service. I have seldom come across it, but even an occasional sneer hurts. In order to swell our ranks and increase our own holiness and spirituality we do not need to censure our neighbors' beliefs. Sincere Christians of any sect trying desperately to live decent lives

should be treated with the greatest of respect and charity, and where should Christian charity begin but on the Catholic altar?

Finally, let us, his parishioners, seek a greater understanding of the sacrifice involved in a priest's dedication of his life to the service of God. Let us realize that he is not necessarily more perfect than are we, that he has much greater problems to solve

in the Herculean task of attempting to fulfill his pledge to help mankind find God, than we lay people have. Let us give him our undivided loyalty and allegiance. With this combination of self-sacrifice, how can God lack appreciation and glory? We all should live for the greater glory of God by striving to make ourselves more Christ-like from day to day. ■ ■ ■

Catechetics for the World

By John T. McGinn, C.S.P.

How can we proclaim the gospel of Christ more effectively to the people in the mission lands? Is there room for improvement in our pulpit and catechetical presentation of the "good news" by which Christ wishes to make disciples of all the nations? More pointedly, given the fact of the providential catechetical revival underway in the Catholic Church for fifty years, can we say that its solid principles and wise conclusions are sufficiently understood and whole-heartedly applied in the mission fields?

These were a few of the vital questions investigated at the International Study Week on Mission Catechetics held at Eichstaett in Germany, July 21-28, 1960. Cardinal Gracias of Bombay was president of the conference. Father John Hofinger, S.J., tireless apostle for the revival in teaching religion, was the capable organizer of the congress. And some 280 missionary bishops and priests who labor in every section in the missions, heard and consulted with top-flight experts on the ideals advocated by the new school of catechetics.

By all odds, it was outstanding among recent international Catholic conventions and one of the most significant mission gatherings ever assembled. It requires no gift of prophecy to predict that it will have immense influence on catechetics even in the homelands.

This study week was the sequel to a notable convention on "Liturgy and the Missions" held in September, 1959, at Nijmegen in Holland. As a result of forthright discussions on the need of liturgical adaptations especially in mission countries, the delegates found themselves constantly confronted with the necessity of modifications in our catechetical teaching. If there has been a liturgical renewal in the Church, there has also been a catechetical revival. Concern with the one inevitably leads to a consideration of the other. In particular, efforts to extend a living liturgy in the missions necessarily provoked disturbing questions as to whether missionaries were stressing adequately the truths on which the liturgy is based. Is not the very content of our catechisms in need of revision? Problems like this inspired repeated demands for a thorough study of catechesis in the mission apostolate.

The choice of Eichstaett for the study week was a happy one since it is so close to Munich where the catechetical revival was born half a century ago. And Munich today can be proud that it is still one of the most advanced catechetical centers in the Catholic world. It was also fortunate that ten Americans and three Canadians were among the delegates. For is it no secret that North America, in other matters so progressive, has been slow to appreciate the rich values of the new catechetics.

The problem of making the Church vitally

Courtesy of *The Shield*, Catholic Students Mission Crusade, 5100 Shattuc Avenue, Cincinnati 26, Ohio.

and effectively present in our world is particularly urgent in the missions. The new nations of Africa and Asia and the common people of South America are clamoring for social, economic, political, and educational reform. These people who for centuries were so long-suffering and docile cry out increasingly for the worldly advantages enjoyed by more favored nations. And these desires have given birth to revolutions on a wider scale than ever witnessed before.

In this hour of crisis, missionaries are not content with business-as-usual methods. They realize that it is a matter of life or death that the Church give authentic and unmistakable witness to the nations that she is the living presence of Christ among men. It is difficult to remember a time when missionaries on so broad a front were so concerned to put their very best foot forward.

Catholic missionaries, endeavoring to bring the Christian mystery to the minds and hearts of these aroused populations, often find themselves severely handicapped. They are deterred not merely by lack of personnel and a dearth of material resources, but also rivals like Western secularism, materialism, nationalism, and Communism. Various other traditions of Christianity also serve to complicate the mission task, though faith in Christ on any terms is an infinity above absence of faith in Him.

Missioners are increasingly aware that they are hampered very much by defects in their own training. Limitations in their own personal understanding of the "good news" they go to the mission field to preach, comprise the chief hindrance to a fruitful apostolate. Christ's Church is in full possession of religious truth. Yet individual members of the Church, and whole groups of Catholics, may be more or less deficient in their balanced comprehension of the Christian message. As a consequence, their presentation of this message may leave much to be desired.

What Father Charles Davis, England's distinguished theologian, says of his own country is fast being realized by zealous Catholics everywhere. He speaks of "the superficial character of so much of our apostolic effort." He complains that "we neglect the content of what we preach. We are anxious to devise ways and means of getting an ever bigger audience to hear what we say but we will not devote the time, effort, and discussion necessary to improve the qual-

ity of what we say. So often it is taken for granted that we are already in full possession of what we have to get across, that our possession of it is so perfect, stable, and nicely balanced, that all we have to do is to work out ways and means of getting it across."

Father Davis is convinced that "the inadequacy of so much of the current popular accounts of Catholic teaching is an out-of-date inadequacy." And he believes that the main obstacle to the forces of renewal in the Church "is a widespread complacency that ignores the inadequacy and presumes quite wrongly that because Catholic faith does not change, our possession and account of it can never be improved. . . . Methods in preaching and teaching are not enough; our concern must be principally with the content and structure of our message."

IMPORTANCE OF CONTENT

We may be excused this extended quotation because it so clearly expresses the motives which inspired the Eichstaett meeting and the driving spirit behind the new catechetics. For the misgiving expressed by Father Davis, in the context of English Catholicism, is even more acutely felt in the missions. The catechesis presently dominant in the missions (and elsewhere) was determined long ago by missionaries who themselves were trained in older schools of catechetics. Missioners carried with them to the mission fields the personal understanding, along with the catechetical texts and handbooks, that enshrined the prevailing outlook of an older day. They were diligent in translating these older catechisms and were indefatigable in devising methods of religious instructions accommodated to the special needs of their people. (It should be noted, in passing, that even the Munich School in its earlier efforts concentrated on improved *methods* rather than on a revision of the *content* of the catechism.) It is therefore understandable that missioners could not be expected to rise above the best insights they had received in their personal training at home, at school, and even in the seminary.

Meanwhile, drastic transformations were occurring, not only in the external world of our twentieth century, but in renewed Catholic awareness of some of the deeper riches of Catholicism. We are all so close to these

Deeper comprehension of Christ's legacy should find concrete expression in the Catechism.

events and so much wedded to "the good old days" that it is only with great effort that we can assimilate the blessings of a new order of things. Inspired by the Holy Spirit and wisely guided by the Holy See, we have seen renewals in every area of the Church's-life. But we are particularly concerned with the revivals in theology, liturgy, and scripture that have brought us fruitful insights into God's designs for us.

Obviously, this deeper comprehension of Christ's legacy is not to remain the personal possession of Catholic scholars. It should not be relegated to seminary libraries and learned reviews. It is not sufficient that the popes write illuminating encyclicals on these matters. These papal directives have far-reaching pastoral implications for souls. And they should find concrete expression in that most influential of all Catholic texts, the catechism.

Change for the sake of change has no place in the new catechetical movement. The catechism is a precious, revered book among Catholics everywhere. Revised catechetical texts are closely scrutinized, and rightly so, by the teaching authority of the Church. At the same time, it is true to say that any catechism is in a sense the product of its own age. It reflects the preoccupations and insights of the Catholic people of a given time and place. The catechetical emphasis of a St. Augustine is not that of a Deharbe. So it not rash to consider a revision of our outlook in catechesis provided this is done by men of responsibility, scholarship, and practical experience. And the Eichstaett meeting was amply blessed with men who are abundantly endowed with these qualities.

Men like Cardinal Gracias of Bombay; Archbishop Denis Hurley, O.M.I., of Durban, South Africa; Bishop Joseph Blomjous of Tanganyika; and many other members of the hierarchy from Europe and the missions participating actively testified to the high seriousness of the undertaking. Speakers like Rev. George Delcuve, S.J., from the International Center for Studies in Religious Education in Brussels; Father Domenico Grasso, S.J., of the Gregorian University in Rome; and Dr. Walbert Bullman, Capuchin

authority from Fribourg give some measure of the meticulous scholarship that was reflected in the papers delivered. But to hierarchical authority and ripened scholarship were added the voices of those who know the religious needs of the people from long, intimate, practical experience. This was abundantly in evidence in the talks of Bishop Larrain of Talca in Chile, Father Martin Ramsauer of Manila, and the indefatigable Father Hofinger, who inspired the meeting.

The Eichstaett congress carried forward by many huge strides the convictions of so many of the most distinguished contemporary religious educators in the Church. While unique in many ways, it did echo the conclusions of the catechetical experts who met for the International Catechetical Congress in Rome in 1950 and the recommendations of the International Summer Session on Religious Education at Antwerp in 1956.

NOT MERE NOVELTY

What were some of these convictions, conclusions, and recommendations? Fortunately, the entire series of papers delivered at the study week will soon be published by Herder and Herder, and the volume should have the widest possible circulation. One thing emerges clearly: the new catechetics is not so novel after all. It is more in the nature of a return (with the assimilation of later advances) to the basic outlook of the Church's earliest catechists like St. Augustine and the other shining lights of the early catechuminate.

With a surprising degree of solidarity, the Eichstaett speakers pleaded for a revision of the *content* of the catechism. *What* we teach was their primary concern; *how* we teach, although highly important, comes later. They insisted that the teaching of religion should stir the hearts as well as the intelligence of our pupils. They give no comfort to those who would dispense with precise definitions. But they did question those excessively abstract and even rationalizing tendencies which might appear to reduce the Faith to a set of intellectual formulae. They advised less concern with sectarian errors and greater emphasis on the positive proclamation of the history of salvation.

This history gives a central position to the mystery of Christ. And it is best comprehended if the catechism, with its doctrinal and moral exactitude, also reflects the great deeds of God, as shown in the Bible, that are made vitally present for us in the liturgy.

We are messengers proclaiming "good news," not only teachers at a blackboard. We should tell the whole marvelous story of salvation, from the fall to the great day of Christ's second coming to us. Christianity is thus not only a body of individual truths, a code of morals, and a set of pious practices. It is the great work of God which calls for not only a response to revealed truth, but an unshakable commitment of the entire person to Christ, shown forth joyfully in the whole of life.

These were some of the thoughts ably propounded at Eichstaett. The delegates

listened to papers entitled "What is the Core of Missionary Preaching," "The Origin and Development of Modern Catechetics," and "The Catechetical Use of the Bible." Topics like "The Role and Qualities of the Catechism," and "Experiences in Preparing a New Catechism" were thoroughly explored.

It is evident that while primarily concerned with catechesis in the missions, the Eichstaett study week grappled with problems that are world-wide. There is no country in the world that does not face a mission problem. As Cardinal Felin of Paris put it: "The whole Church should go on a mission footing." That is why the remark of one observer may very well be regarded as literal truth. "This congress on catechetics in the missions will soon affect the teaching of religion in parochial schools in Boston, Catholic colleges in St. Louis, inquiry classes in San Francisco, and all points in between."

Instruction on The Church

By Rev. Martin Ramsaver

We find frequently quoted in catechetical literature the words of Saint Cyprian: "No one can have God for his Father who does not have the Church for his Mother." This sentence expresses well the importance of the Church in our salvation, and assigns her a prominent place in our Catholic teaching. And, as we shall see more clearly later on, the teaching concerning her influences our whole outlook and conduct as Christians.

Any teacher of Catholic religion will readily admit proper instruction about the Church is more difficult than the teaching of many other doctrines contained in the catechism. The teaching on the Church comprises many individual truths and includes—because of her mission and function—different aspects, both apologetic and dogmatic.

Thus the content of our teaching on the Church becomes extensive. It expands and radiates into all parts of Catholic teaching; and we become aware, that we will not understand her fully "at once," but only by

gradual stages as we enter deeper and deeper into the whole world of God's revelation. All these circumstances makes the instruction on the Church difficult, and therefore a catechetical "concentration" is absolutely imperative.

Because it is a difficult subject to teach there are some shortcomings in our teaching on the Church. Our aims go further than the catechisms which we generally have at hand. In our manuals we miss quite a bit of what we read in the encyclical *Mystici Corporis* which contains the papal teaching on the Church. And this "gap" is felt even more when we try to promote an active participation in the worship of the Church, as Pius XII requested in his encyclical *Mediator Dei*. It is quite evident that our catechisms and manuals are somehow defective, and do not come up to our expectations and needs in this matter.

Thus the question arises: Where exactly, lies the deficiency? What is wrong, that it may be improved?

The answer is that our catechisms are generally satisfied with a too external, too

juridical-hierarchical concept of the inner nature of the Church. What mention is made usually escapes our attention almost entirely because it is not given the prominence and stress that it deserves. Thus the concept generally fostered by the catechisms does not completely tally with the idea of the Church Pius XII developed in his encyclicals, and is of little use in our liturgical aspirations. What the traditional catechisms present is mainly the "exterior" part of the Church; we do not meet the "whole" Church.

This lacuna in our teaching on the Church is the result of stressing facts and details that serve an apologetical purpose, and which make our teaching more bulky than complete. A historical analysis will show that the heavily apologetic orientation is the reason our concept of the Church is incomplete. The early catechisms, written before the controversy with the Protestants, show an entirely different picture. But an imprudent apologetical emphasis, in time, brought about a change in the presentation of doctrine on the Church and a deplorable narrowing to a predominantly external, juridical-hierarchical concept of the Church.

To avoid any misunderstanding it is not the treatment of apologetical questions that we consider as harmful, but the emphasis and exclusiveness which these questions receive. It has done great harm to our teaching on the Church.

Some apologetical teaching will always be required, especially where the Catholic Church comes into contact with other religions—Christian and non-Christian. This is the situation in the missions. Thus external conditions make it necessary for us to use more apologetics than might be necessary in other places. This gives new weight to the apologetic emphasis we find in our manuals.

In addition to this there is the fact that the catechumens themselves approach us with a purely external concept of the Church. This makes our task twice as hard. What they observe about the Church, previous to any instruction, is her external constitution and organization. They see how she is composed of men with the same religious beliefs and interest, and ruled by leaders who govern in a monarchical pattern.

If, in these conditions, we follow the path set by our apologetically orientated manuals, we only confirm the external concept the catechumens already have and leave them without the grasp of the "whole" Church,

which essentially includes more than what can be seen with our eyes, or demonstrated by apologetical procedures.

We are no doubt generally aware of the shortcomings mentioned above and try to compensate by a balanced teaching. But to be able to do this in a more methodical manner, it will be very helpful to understand more clearly how the apologetical attitude has a natural trend to develop that defective external and juridical-hierarchical concept of the Church. We shall see this by an historical analysis from which we shall draw our conclusion for a better teaching on the Church.

The first catechism-like books we possess from the first part of the 16th century speak very clearly of the Church as an institution for our salvation. This is because she is the Body of Christ, and the Holy Ghost dwells in her, uniting and sanctifying all the members who were made his temples by baptism. These considerations still prevail in the catechism written by Canisius and the catechism of the Council of Trent (*Catechismus Romanus*).

BAPTISM AND THE CHURCH

They do not particularly stress the external and visible elements in the Church just as they do not stress the fact that Baptism, by which we are received into this community and made its members, is an external and visible sign. The significance of both, Church and Baptism, lies in their importance for our salvation. But this cannot be perceived by our senses and must be accepted on faith. Therefore what the catechisms stress and explain is this inner, supernatural reality of the Church which is accessible only through Faith. Doing this the catechisms of that time drew heavily upon the writings of Saint Paul and Saint John, using the parables of the Mystical Body (cf. 1 Cor. 12) and the Vine and Branches (Joh. 15).

This presentation began to change with the Counter-Reformation. With the exception of Canisius and the *Catechismus Romanus* we now find a new and constantly growing emphasis: The points contested by the reformers are defended and proved in great detail—but the rest of the doctrine is hardly touched upon. Thus the teaching begins to lose its balance. This tendency

goes so far that catechisms begin to appear which treat only the disputed matter.

With regard to the teaching on the Church the catechisms were forced to defend the Catholic Church as the true and indefectible foundation of Christ's Kingdom. The "visibility" which was simply denied by the reformers received special attention in this presentation. This denial included not only the existence of the hierarchical structure of the Church and the acknowledgment of a real authority for teaching and governing, but also the very possibility of refuting their position since refutation demanded the "visibility" as a tool.

Thus we can understand how the *visibility* of the Church became the cornerstone of our teaching on the Church. Each of the attributes of the true Church was shown not only as present in the Catholic Church, but also as "visible." Less visible aspects in the Church were neglected, since they had no value in the controversy.

This, then, was the trend of the apologetical approach: It stressed the external visible element, which was the key concept in its defense. It was so predominant that all other considerations were pushed aside. Thus, in a short time, nothing remained which would demonstrate that the Church, as the God-given institution for our salvation (although this claim was never given up!) also had a deeper sphere, an essentially supernatural and much more precious element, which in itself could not be seen nor be made visible.

According to Canisius and the Roman Catechism, the mark of the Church's sanctity (to take her most characteristic sign) is the result of her ontological relationship with God: of the membership of each baptized person with Christ; of the indwelling of the Holy Ghost. Only after this contemplation of the inner nature of the Church does the explanation turn to the visible structure of the Church and show how in her external sphere this intimate union with God is shown forth and "revealed" as for example in the celebration of the holy sacrifice, in the administration of the sacraments and in the presence of heroic sanctity among its members.

Later Catechisms of the Counter-Reformation take the opposite direction in their exposition. They begin with the external sphere of the Church—but do not follow it through until they reach her inner life.

Thus in speaking about the sanctity of the Church they refer to the manifest sanctity of Christ, her founder; to her holy doctrine; to her holy means (sacraments in particular); and to the saints of the Church, the sanctity of whom has ostensibly been shown by their miracles.

The purpose behind this enumeration and explanation was to attest the Catholic Church as Christ's true Church. Other and further reflections were not necessary for an apologetical interest. Therefore, it was proper that the catechisms concluded their explanation without going deeper to the source of this "visible" sanctity of the Church.

PROPER PERSPECTIVE

Thus the exterior and visible sanctity appears neither to derive from nor refer to ontological sanctity. Some will argue that it is not the purpose of the catechism to give a complete exposition of our Faith. While this is true the fundamental doctrines must nevertheless be presented in their proper perspective.

This process of *exteriorization* affects not only the mark of sanctity but also other points of doctrine as well. The visible and exterior phenomenon of the Church stands alone, independent, and separated from the inner essential and supernatural reality.

Such a strong and predominantly apologetical trend necessarily affected the whole concept of the Church. The sanctity attributed to the Church is no longer the ontological sanctity of her members. We have seen above how this attribute of the Church was deduced from the fact that the individual was consecrated to God, sanctified by the indwelling of the Holy Ghost, and a member of a Body whose Head is Christ. The fact of sin within the Church was admitted, but this was not considered as a real argument against this assertion.

In other words, until the trends of the Counter-Reformation the Church was proven to be holy, because it was evident that her members were holy. But now the sanctity attributed to the Church is not the sanctity of her members, but that particular power of her principles and means ending toward sanctification. Holy Church means now an institution that is in possession of a doctrine and means which can bring its members toward sanctification. Thus the

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reality that is present in the Church.*

word "Church" is no longer understood as the community of all the baptized, but has become the equivalent of a *juridical power*; of a code of doctrine and precepts.

The same process of exteriorization is to be noticed very clearly when the catechisms speak about the value and necessity of the Church for our salvation. Canisius still refers to the Church's relationship to Christ: "Whoever is separated from Christ's Body which is the Church cannot be saved." To-day the reason for asserting this same necessity is seen in the doctrine, precepts and means of the Church. We see here how the explanation remains in the field of the exterior, "visible" elements of the Church without penetrating the inner reason. Thus it is not surprising that the majority of catechisms are content with affirming the necessity of the Church for our salvation, without seeking any reason.

All this shows how we have lost sight of the full reality which is present in the Church. The visible element had grown independent from its invisible core; and the inner supernatural character of the Church, the mystical union with Christ, effected by the power of the Holy Ghost, is, in most cases, not even mentioned. How can we now understand and explain the true function of the Church in our salvation; a point that is essential in our teaching on the Church.

How far we have permitted apologetical aims to push us! The teaching on the Church was formulated as a defense against denials and distortions. It was not God's full revelation that determined the matter to be treated, but the pronouncements of adversaries. While protecting the visible, outer sphere, we lost sight of the mystery hidden beneath. Once the development had reached this point the next step was quite logical.

For the sake of unified teaching in larger regions we find from the middle of the 18th century so-called uniform catechisms, in which the presentation of the Church reached a "final" stage. During the controversy of the preceding Counter-Reformation, the meaning of "Church" had changed from the community of the baptized who are

united in Christ and sanctified by the Holy Ghost, to an institution of juridical power, symbolized by a code of doctrine precepts, and certain means. God is not seen in an immediate, inner relationship with the Church—aside from the fact of its institution and some vague "assistance." Thus God retreats into the background; both in the teaching and in the Christian consciousness.

The prestige of the clergy as the representatives of God grows, as a consequence, in a definitely deistic direction. God's presence and work in the Church is not shown and explained. It is rather the activity and functions of the clergy, and hierarchy that is described. They assume the functions previously attributed to doctrine, precepts and means. They "lead" men to salvation through their doctrine, precepts and sanctifying means. The "Church," once the baptized, and later an impersonal power and code, has now become identified with the "hierarchy."

INNER NATURE NEGLECTED

Thus we arrive—ultimately because of apologetical emphasis—at a *juridical-hierarchical* concept of the Church, which is particularly harmful because of its "deistic" connotations. One catechism explains that while Christ was still alive, He was the only authority. But after His death (sic) Saint Peter and the other apostles were appointed as the visible authority who were in turn followed by the Pope and bishops. To speak thus, means to provoke deistic concepts. The Mystery of Christ never ends with the death on Calvary but has its fulfillment from the way Christ's death and resurrection are joined together in Christ's own teaching, and especially in St. Paul's writing (see v.g. Mt. 16: 21; Rom. 4:25).

Catechetical instruction on the Church which explains our relationship to Christ by referring to His death (and perhaps also to His ascension by which "Christ left us behind!") rather than to His resurrection (examples can even be found in very recent catechetical literature) are again the consequence of a too apologetical orientation. Christ's resurrection is considered primarily

from an apologetical aspect: 'as the proof for His mission and divinity, or perhaps, also as the just reward for His obedience unto death (cf. Phil. 2:8ff). But over and above these aspects (which are correct in themselves) we somehow forget the infinitely greater soteriological importance of Christ's resurrection as the center and the cornerstone in our present order of salvation (cf. 1 Cor. 15).

The resurrection is not only the climax of Christ's own life and mission (cf. Lk. 24:26), but by His resurrection Christ became the cause of our salvation (Rom. 4:25) and the source of our new life (Eph. 1:20-23). And only by His resurrection did Christ also become the perfect model for our own pilgrimage which in union with Him, the "first-born" and the "risen-from-the-dead," will lead us through the time of probation to participation in Christ's glory (1 Petr. 1:3-9; 4:12f; Rom. 8:17, 29-39).

We are brought into union with Christ's death and resurrection by baptism (Rom.

6:3-11), and thus become members of the Church which is His Body, and live—although not yet in its full perfection—the life of the risen Head: "(God) made us live with the life of Christ . . . together with Christ Jesus and in Him He raised us up and enthroned us in the heavenly realm" (Eph. 2:5f). But this union which we now possess with the Head—through the Church—is the Divine pledge of our own salvation and glory: Where the Head, there the Body.

If this truth becomes once again the center of our Christian consciousness (where it belongs according to the revelation), it will—aside from filling our earthly life with deep joy and gratitude, and a sense of invincible security and superiority—give us a true idea of the Church and a holy reverence for her. It will bring forth the spontaneous desire for a most intimate union with her and participation in her life and activity which reaches its culmination in the Divine worship of the entire Mystical Body in the Liturgy (cf. Med. Dei n. 20).

(To be concluded next month.)

READING I'VE LIKED

It is a delight to report that Father Charles Davis has greatly expanded the ideas so cogently advanced in his article "Liturgy? Gosh, Yes!" (See GUIDE, No. 149). In *Liturgy and Doctrine* (Sheed & Ward, \$2.50) he conveys more knowledge on the relation of liturgy, scripture and doctrine to the Church's apostolate than any one book I know. In justice to ourselves and our inquirers, every catechist should master its contents.

For too long we seldom mentioned the Resurrection except as a proof of our Lord's divinity. Thanks to the new catechetics, we see the Risen Christ also as one who triumphed over sin and death who is King of the Kingdom we proclaim. Regarded as a classic in Europe, *The Resurrection* by Rev. F. X. Durrwell, C.S.S.R., Sheed & Ward, \$6.00, develops the long neglected consequences of the Easter mystery. It can and should enrich practically every lesson in our course for inquirers.

The excellent *Christian Life Series* by Sister Jane Marie Murray, O.P. (Fides), is being made available in a paperback edition for the Confraternity of Christian Doctrine. The first volume, "On the Way to God," is already completed and is in the bookstores.

GUIDE

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GUIDE

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Guide Lights

NYET FOR NEGROES? . . .

On the road to Damascus Our Lord said to St. Paul: "It is hard for thee to kick against the goad." We might think of these words when we consider the growing problem of the Negro influx into large cities. The tide cannot be stemmed. All the fingers in the world will not plug the dykes. In the vain attempt to preserve the character of many of our urban parishes, we have simply antagonized the incoming colored people and have retarded any success in convert work among them. We have been kicking against the goad to our own detriment.

There is, however, a higher motive that ought to guide us in our relations with the Negro. For St. Paul there was "neither Jew nor Gentile, barbarian nor Greek." He wrote that "God hath made of one all men to dwell upon the face of the earth." All are children of God; and we must not confine our ministry to those of our own color, or to those of a certain economic status. The truly apostolic heart does not pick and choose.

SIGNS FROM THE TIMES . . .

On this matter the *New York Times* has published some significant remarks from the Catholic Church in Chicago. At the present rate of increase this city is expected to be half Negro within twenty years. By the same projection only 6% of this population will be Catholic. This is the same percentage which was established a half a century ago. The sterling efforts of so many Chicago priests is barely holding the line. As a consequence, Cardinal Meyer has made public portions of an Archdiocesan Clergy Conference which dealt with this question.

In this Conference the Cardinal called on all to intensify their efforts to insure full integration of Negro Catholics into "the complete life of the Church." He said that this meant eliminating discrimination in Catholic schools, hospitals, and fraternal and parish organizations, as well as churches. He urged administrators in all these areas to follow the Supreme Court's desegregation decision of 1954 and act "with due and deliberate speed."

He asserted that "we must remove from the Church on the local scene any possible taint of racial discrimination or racial segregation, and help provide the moral leadership for eliminating racial discrimination

from the whole community." He also called for intensified efforts to evangelize the Negro, while at the same time he warned against regarding him solely as an object of conversion. . . . "We must never lose sight," he said, "of his needs as a human being, his legitimate desire to be accepted with dignity into the fabric of society generally."

At the same Conference the Rev. Patrick T. Curran reported, "our indecision about the Negro is beginning to hurt." He said that in the past when Negroes had moved into new parishes, priests had a hard time making up their minds whether to "fight it, ignore it, or try to live with it." "Here and there," he said, "parishes confronted with change have lined up with local resistance movements to keep the Negro out. With the collapse of the walls of resistance, these parishes have had to deal with 'the problem' anyhow—with the added handicap of bad will in the Negro community toward the Catholic Church."

The Rev. Rollins E. Lambert, first Negro priest ordained in the Archdiocese of Chicago, explained the Negro's doubts about the sincerity of the Catholic Church in regard to full integration. "He knows that his race is making great progress in many fields," Father Lambert reported. "He sees that the color line is breaking down rapidly everywhere. And he sees that the Church which ought to be leading this progress is lagging behind or even fighting it. He experiences the racial prejudice of white Catholics, including, sometimes, priests. He observes that we preach against many kinds of sin, but seldom about the sin of hating our neighbors if they happen to be Negroes. He notices the silence of the Catholic Church in his struggle, as in Little Rock or areas even closer to home, and remembers it. His conclusion is that the Catholic Church is lying when it claims to be universal, and that it is hypocritical when it tolerates racial prejudice and segregation."

COMMENTS FROM COMMONWEAL . . .

An article in *Commonweal* by a school teacher in New Orleans spotlights the strife in that unhappy city. The writer says, "The religious leaders of all faiths in New Orleans cannot be charged with the ill-will and insincerity that characterizes the public officials of the City and State. The manifest

conclusion is that they know what to preach, but they do not know what to do."

He says, "The key to the whole racial problem here seems to be in the hands of the Catholic Church; and the inability to turn that key is a particularly poignant one. The decision to imitate public school desegregation—instead of setting the example by desegregating the Catholic school system—has resulted in mental and moral chaos among the people. White Catholic racists openly boast that 'we have stopped the Archbishop.' They take credit for the fact that His Excellency's forthright denunciations of sinful racial segregation have never been followed up by a workable, gradual plan for removing segregation from Catholic facilities."

LETTER TO THE LIGURIAN . . .

In our search for something interesting we came across the following letter in the February issue of the *Liguorian*. It suggests some reflection for priest and people.

"Events of the past few months gave ample evidence that we have a long way to go to rid non-Catholics of many erroneous beliefs regarding the Catholic Church and its teachings. Those who don't know the truths of Catholicism are either (1) the contentious variety who want nothing more than a fight or (2) the sincere Christians who for any number of reasons do not honestly understand what Catholics believe or why.

"I was originally of the first group. While I was in that class I was unnerved by two things: First, my often vehement protestations to a Catholic were never refuted in kind, but were answered with quiet confidence. Second, during my many attendances at Mass I never heard a priest say a derogatory word about any non-Catholic or his religious faith. So I became a member of the second group in an effort to find out why Catholics seemed so self-assured and why they considered Christians not of their fold as brethren in Christ instead of adversaries to be met in verbal battle." N.L.

N.L. was fortunate. We could hope that all N.L.'s would discover the same Catholic confidence and cordiality. We could also work for it.

MINING PROTESTANT ORE . . .

This is the title of an interesting article by Camilius Talafous, O.S.B., in the February issue of *Worship*. It was suggested to him by the words of Pope Pius XI. "Do we know all that is valuable, good, and Christian in the fragments of ancient Catholic truth? Detached fragments of a gold-bearing rock also contain the precious ore."

Father Talafous teaches a course in "Contemporary Protestantism." Last summer he did a little research by attending two Protestant services each Sunday. The following excerpts from his article represent some of the ore he mined out during his investigations.

"Friendliness, personal interest of all in all, seems to me as characteristic of Protestant churches as sanctuary lights are of Catholic churches. This begins with the usher who invariably meets you at the door and only ends with the pastor who, with equal invariability, sees you off at the same door after the service.

"That the entire congregation participated vocally in the service was in all cases evidently an accepted assumption. When I stood just watching or sat passively listening, most often someone near offered me a hymnal with the proper place opened or some other service book. Possibly Protestant ministers have their problems with non-participating members, but it doesn't look like a problem to a Catholic priest! Everyone sang and did so with real life and vigor, with none of that self-conscious hesitation that makes some incipient hymn singers in Catholic churches sing in such a gentle, inaudible falsetto."

DAY AT DARLINGTON . . .

The Paulist Institute was invited to conduct a workshop on convert techniques at Immaculate Conception Seminary, Darlington, New Jersey, on February 8th. The two priests who went there were most cordially received by Monsignor Brady and the members of his staff. About eighty students from the top two classes participated. The talks and discussions underlined the excellent material which is given in a regular course by Father O'Brien. A number of these workshops will be held in the next few months at various seminaries from the East coast to the midwest.

Workshops for priests are also being planned. The first one will be held at St. John's Provincial Seminary, Plymouth, Michigan. Anyone interested in having these workshops in their area should contact The Paulist Institute.

CONVERT WORKERS CONVENTION . . .

The fifth national convention of Convert Workers, under the auspices of the Guilds of St. Paul, 512 West Second Street, Lexington, Ky., will be held in Louisville, Ky., on April 29th and 30th of this year. Those interested in attending may write directly to The Guild for a detailed program.

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